





SIX-GUN HEROES



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SIX-CUN HEROES SIX-CUN HEROES TO SEE TO SE

























T WAS nearing sundown in Dusty Pike rade through the ness and headed onto the lonely trail that led toward Twin Forks. He was weary from long hours in the astille, and his meant was moving with the leaden strides of a very tired peny.

bed down for the night in those pine modiles. How do you feel about it, boy?" A man who to his horse is only doing what comes naturally. The animal soorted and came to a halt. He didn't understand the words, but he had a feeling from the tone of voice that maybe they were going to rest now and he was all for it. The rider was no longer urging him

on and on and on. Before dismounting, Dusty gave the landscape a sweeping glaces in the manner of a trail-wise man. Many dangers could lurk in see everything before reperating yourself from YOUR CANGES

Hu hard rerood aloudy, then his elence was arrested He sured in awe and wonderment and recognition. The setting sun was tinting colors that were desslingly beautiful. He male. For six months be had been away in the vest, alkalas plains back youder; for six in the Two Focks country; and in those six months he had almost forgotten what it was

As if by a mitsele, new life flowed through his veins and his tired feeting yanished. This was his borneland, where he had been born" and reared. He would ride on the last few miles into Twin Forks, he would see Ma end Pa and Jake and Ned and Sheriff Barley and all his other aid friends. He knew new that the happy reunion just equida't wait till

"Our autoria", how?" he eried, and the exalternent of his voice worked liked magic to put new life in the tired herse, too. They proved stead Dy forward, and as they from

SLAYER AT SUNDOWN nearer and nearer to Twin Forks, Dusty saw more and more familier landmarks. They were and his heart overflowed with toy. He had perhaps a half-mile more to cover

when, in the fading twilight, he sostted tha white namer tacked to a tree. Dosty chackled. "Shoriff Barley's been out this way," he thought, "portin' up one of his dodgers. Won-

der who's wanted now, and for what?" Curiosity caused him to halt before the handbill. He read: WANTED William "Dusty" Pike

FOR MURDER In the darkness, Dusty crept stealthily to-

ward the shack that loomed like a mass of black in the clearing just about. As he had Secred. Ned Gunder wasn't home, which was Dusty had known Ned as long as he could remember, and Ned was a creature of habit

Ned, a trapper, worked diligently by day. And every night he went into town to play poket with the boys. That was habit. Another habit Ned had was beying everything, including his weekly newspaper, The Clarion This was what At first, the shock of seeing his own name

en a poster as WANTED FOR MURDER had almost narelyzed Dusty. He had exceddumbly at the dodger until the fading aut made it impossible for him to reed any more. He had speculated, Honed, Perhaps there was another man in the territory with the identical name of William Dusty Pike, That was a possicered from the stunning shock, he took the shack and a look at eld segies of The Cirrion. The foor was unlocked and the pile of newsnamers was there. Dusty lighted the eil lemm and sat it on the rough hown table. He placed g pile of newspapers on the table and sat facing the only window in the full light of the lamp.

The chance of discovery wee mil, he felt. Nebody would be sround in this woods at night. Peverishly he scenned the papers until he found whet he sought. It was shotking! The next who had been killed was his old friend, Sheriff Barley. It had happened on the very

roune wost of swept. It was concaring a nor men who had been killed was his old friend, Sacriff Barley. It had happened on the very day that Duny left town at menths ago. And an accorymous note to the Deputy Shreiff had scotted him. William Deaty Pilks, of the killing. One man was dead; one man had left

town. It was incontrovertible evidence!

A crackling twig was the warning. Instinctively, Dusry Supped from the chair and hit the earthen Soor as a shot cracked and a singing 44 sing passed above his head.

A moment later, Ned Gunder burst in the door. "Dusty, old pard! Thundering hoavens, I nearly killed you! Are you all right! I don't bit you, did I? Saw somebody in here and thought it was a pressier. Never expected to

cee you?"
"I'm okay, Ned," said Dusty, "I figured you wouldn't mind if I came in and I looked at your old papers to read about the murder I'm airpposed to have complitted?"

"Sn't that reful!" exclaimed Ned. "I never believed you did it, old friend. But the town is nighty certain of it. If you showed your face, you'd be lynched in a minute: It's good you attored bere. If I was you I'd high-sail

it away mighty fast?"
"That's good edvice," said Dusty. "Bilt I'm
plamb were out and I know you won't mind
letting an old friend bunk hare for the night
till I get some errength back in my boars.
By the way, bow come you'rs home an early?

No poker?"
"Ob, a gume started all right, but some of the boys kind of binned that I was chartin' and I got up and elected out. I hate trouble the shart."

"Den't blems you?" said Duety. "Wall, Times degence tired I'm gaing to eard right up have set the floor is from to the door on good you no some sleep. You sin't really harboring a mardeer, Ned. You know I didn't kill the layman."

"Of searce, of searce!" exclaimed Ned. Dusty was so weary that he slept, but it

was an uneasy, Siful cleep. For he had the certain feeling about his "friend" Nad that wasn't good!

It was sunset egain. Dusty and Ned hed paused, high on the trail, almow in the identical spot where Dusty had viewed the pletious sight in the day before with his heart full of happiness a homecoming. "Mighty nite of you to ride this far with me on my getawity," each

"Nothing! Nothing at all!" declared Ned.
"A friend sin's a friend if he don't 'etick by a pard who's in trouble. But if I was you I'd light out feet. It sin't healthy for you in these parts right now!"

"I can't teer myself away from this all-fired beautiful numer!" asserted Dusty. "Look yeader. Feast your eyes on those blazing colors! I sell you. Ned, access that makes a rean blank. It makes you realise that there's a mighty Power up yender somewhere. I'd sure hate to have marker on my roul and go to face a

Power like that?
Ned became puls, thaking, almost hysterical.
"Stop at Stop in?" be creed. "All right, I'll confess. I killed Berby, He discovered I was using a maried deke. I had to kill birn. You know when those gamblers would have done to see if it got out. And you were herring

teem. It was easy to put the blame on you."

Nell's eyes fixed with a demonite light as
the full red rays of the setting sup were upon
them. He continued. "I didn't think it will
hart you. I didn't think you were were coming
batch. And then, I see right, I see you in my
cable, I shot at you. If I had killed you. I'd
have been elect?"

He paused, and bic lips twisted into a crocked smile. "And you're going to be deed right now!"

II is elx-gun blazed. Dusty emselved a hard feet against bis friend's obin. They grappied on the ground for a moment, then Dusty had the uponr hand.

"Plagus ht" enaried Ned, groggily. "That blamed can in my eyes made me miss." "Fes," said Dusty. "That surset is real magic?"

TEX RITTER AND THE "VALLEY OF HATE"





































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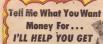






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